

#### Natural Wild Indian Tobacco – Talking Paper

Presented by René Locklear White, Lumbee Indian Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian Sept. 8-9, 2017

## **INDIGENOUS PLANT**

- Natural wild plant, "sacred herb" used primarily in sacred ceremonies.
- Tobacco is a gift from the Creator, the smoke carries one's thoughts & prayers to Creator.

# SUPER-STAR FEATURES

- Unadulterated plant, without additives; benefits seem to outweigh its risks.
- "Tobacco put North Carolina on the map;" according to the N.C. Department of Agriculture North Carolina is known for producing the highest-quality tobacco in the world because N.C. soils and climate produce the richest, most flavorful leaf.

## VARIOUS BENEFITS

- Used to treat various physical conditions
- Pain killer: earache, toothache, etc.; Poultice over bee sting or bug bite or to remove a tick.
- Tobacco tea: a natural insecticide.
- Analysis of natural tobacco leaf has been shown to contain thousands of endogenous (growing or originating from within an organism) plant organic and inorganic chemical compounds.
- Tobacco in and of itself does not present a health threat. Look at the threats from modern tobacco products and the production process.

#### GROWING

- Easy to grow like tomatoes.
- Tobacco nectar attracts birds such as hummingbirds.
- Deer and young animals are attracted to young seedlings.
- There are 70 species of tobacco.
- Potent adulterated variants are better known around the world, not the wild natural tobacco. **NICOTINE**
- "Nicotine" the stimulant in tobacco is named after Jean Nicot, a French ambassador in Portugal who cured a man with a tumor applying tobacco poultices.
- Nicotine is an alkaloid that in lesser doses produces a relaxing and stimulating effect, and increases the level of dopamine and serotonin (two natural "happy" brain chemicals).

## HISTORY & BAD SCIENCE OF MODIFIED TOBACCO

- Only in the last decades has tobacco been aggressively proclaimed harmful.
- Up until the '50s doctors promoted tobacco.
- In 1982 tobacco became the first U.S. genetically modified plant.
- Smoking studies do not differentiate between natural and chemically treated tobacco, or between natural and GMO tobacco.
- According to the American Lung Association U.S. tobacco products have approximately 600 additives; 69 of these chemicals are known to cause cancer, and many are poisonous.
- These include: various microorganisms, pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, heavy metals, foreign materials such as metal, cardboard, Styrofoam, wood fragments, small animals and insects, and other elements such as organic solvents and dioxins.
- Through inhalation these particles make their way to the lungs and digestive system.